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Conference Abstract

Expanding Core Capability in Digitisation by Sharing of Resources: the CSIRO Collections Program for Digitisation of Collection Specimens

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Abstract

Educational Materials Share Fair at SPNHC 2018

Given the high number of specimens present around the world in natural history museums, digitisation, or the transformation of specimens from the physical to digital, has become the collections community's grand challenge. A team made up of volunteers and casual staff are human resources for the digitisation of Australia's largest biological collections, over 15 million specimens held at CSIRO. An image-based digitisation program at the Australian National Insect Collection (ANIC), and a similar imaging project at the Australian National Herbarium (ANH) are transforming the way we engage with volunteers & recruit staff in collections digitisation. Providing insights on the CSIRO specimen digitisation program, we will share resources and materials that can easily be adapted to your next collections digitisation program.

In 2018, we found that diversity and flexibility in roles assigned to personnel rather than assigning rigid and specific roles to individuals, was more successful for our collections digitisation volunteers and staff. Also, we introduced dexterity games which help develop fine motor skills and hand coordination while breaking up the monotony of the role. We also

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integrated materials aimed at educating the volunteers and staff about digitisation and curation and the impact of digitising collections. All of these improvements to the digitisation program are building a sense of determination amongst the dedicated volunteers and staff and curation levels are growing, leading to the increase and maintenance of collection integrity.

Build scale and value by integrating these new lessons learned, procedures, manuals, training documentation, workflows and work health and safety into your next digitisation project.

Keywords

data mobilization, digital, entomology, collections, curating, biodiversity, volunteers, digitization

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